

Arlington Bicycle Committee Minutes for October 7, 2002

In attendance were board members Ted Packard, Ron Sender, Scott Smith, Stephan Miller, and Christopher Tonkin. Others present were Robert Heintz, Nathaniel Stevens, David White, Cathy Garnett and Joey Glushko.

The meeting was started at 7:29

The minutes from the last meeting were corrected and approved.

Review of Recent Events

Town Day. The event was well attended and many new contacts for ABAC were made. There was a short discussion of a comment made by a MBTA bus driver who stopped by the ABAC table. The driver complained that bikers don't like being "beeped" as the bus passes but the driver thinks that it is essential for safety. The discussion was tabled for a later meeting.

Joey presented a summary of the survey taken by ABAC at Town Day. There were 120 responses to the questionnaire. Joey created a spreadsheet containing all the data collected. Anyone wishing to view the detailed results should contact Joey.

Transportation Committee Update (Scott).

Scott notified us that David Barker of the MBTA will be at the next TAC meeting. The Next Mass. Ave. Corridor meeting will be on Thursday October 10 at the Fox Branch Library. The redesign of the Mass. Ave./Rt. 16 intersection will be discussed. Volunteers have been doing traffic counts along Mass. Ave. in East Arlington and have logged 30-40 bicycles per hour crossing Rt. 16 into Cambridge in the Morning. This is about 4% the number of autos moving through the same intersection. The TAC is leaning against bike lanes. Scott discussed the value of bike lanes as opposed to wide traffic lanes.

We briefly discussed the Summer St. redevelopment that will finally begin next spring. Joey asked about the misleading sign recently installed on Rt. 16 giving directions for bicycle access to Alewife. She will talk to someone at the MDC about having it removed.

Bikeway Maintenance.

Bikeway Repaving. We briefly discussed investigating why the edging of the newly repaved path has not yet been completed. Stephan noted that it is getting late in the season to spread grass seed.

Bow Street Bikeway Access. Cathy presented modified site plans for the access ramp. There is a major “roadblock” in the way of completing this upgrade. The security fence gate must swing over the street end of the ramp. Whether the plan can be executed is not clear at this point because of this politically sensitive issue. Ron and Jack will talk to Rich Bento about details and scheduling.

Alewife Connector/MDC Paths. Robert told us that the path will be unpaved. The neighborhood is currently unhappy about the plan. They feel that flood remediation is much more important than installing the path. Flooding in the area is a big problem. The MDC master plan for the area does include flood control. The neighborhood also feels that the path is largely unnecessary since the planned route is close to existing roads. Ron suggested that the plan could be made to serve the community as a whole and that Robert should talk to Bryce Nesbitt who has been a prime mover behind the alewife path. We discussed and began crafting a letter to the Selectmen about the Alewife path connector from the end of LaFayette Street to the Minuteman. Scott asked if connecting Thorndike Street to the path might be a better alternative. Ron pointed out that the end of Thorndike Street is private which would introduce some complexity into that plan. Ron suggested that the issue be postponed and discussed off line.

Planning and Development Updates.

Golds Gym. The gym is expanding. ABAC would like to request that they install additional bicycle parking. They will need the approval of the Redevelopment Board to proceed with the expansion. We will write a letter to the Board suggesting they require the installation of a bike rack.

Moving Together Bike/Ped Conference. Several representatives from ABAC will attend

Rails to Trails National Conference. The idea of hosting a tour of the Minuteman Bikeway during the conference was suggested. Ron pointed out that this would be tough because the meeting is in Providence. ABAC is however, interested in helping with the meeting.

Biking in Arlington Schools. Dave McKenna will possibly be at the next ABAC meeting. He has issues about letting kids bike to school. Joey added that we should be ready to address those issues. Ron attempted looking up the supposed policy against elementary students riding their bicycles to school and

couldn't find one in writing. Christopher suggested a bicycle safety course could be developed and presented in the schools and that students could be tested before they are allowed to ride to school. The consensus was that we have to begin the process of changing this unwritten rule or the policy will never be changed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25